

Opening Remarks, Frank Press, Senior Fellow, Carnegie Institute of
Washington

OPENING REMARKS

Secretary Goode, Congressman Brown

- I. Minister Suzuki, Director Witt, [^]Ladies and Gentlemen: Welcome participants to the first US/Japan Earthquake Policy Seminar on behalf of the National Academy of Sciences. It is appropriate that the meeting has been convened in this building
 - A. The NAS is an organization established some 130 years ago to bring policy level government officials and scientists and engineers together to improve policy making in the United States
 - B. Much of the effort in launching the IDNDR took place in this building, involving many of the Japanese and Americans in this room today.
 1. IDNDR would not have been possible without the strong support of the Japanese government and Japanese scientists and engineers.
- II. This meeting is unique and may be historic for many reasons:
 - A. Commissioned at the highest level --grew out of discussions between Prime Minister Murayama and President Clinton in 1995, and the initiative on national disaster reduction announced by Prime Minister Hashimoto and President Clinton at the Tokyo summit earlier this year.
 - B. Level of participation: policy officials including cabinet officers, agency heads, leading scientists and engineers.
 - C. First US/Japan meeting involving a dialog between policy level officials and the technical communities of both countries, with participation of public organizations, and the private sector.

- D. The Northridge and Kobe earthquakes were a shock to both our countries and taught us that we must do better in all aspects of earthquake emergency management (including mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery).
 - 1. These tragic events will set a tone of purposefulness and inspire us propose meaningful recommendations and a plan of action
 - E. Recognition that our two countries by cooperating and sharing information, experiences and learning from each other can improve their ability to reduce the suffering and losses from earthquakes in their own countries and others as well.
- III. I have the honor of serving as moderator of this conference and I want to express my gratitude to the organizers for this appointment.